



## SIGNS YOUR NEIGHBOR IS RUNNING A MARIJUANA GROW OPERATION



This is provided for informational purposes only. While marijuana grow operations are appearing on a frequent and accelerating basis in residential neighborhoods, they are almost always connected to organized crime. Do not take it upon yourself to investigate or approach the suspects. Call your local law enforcement or use the "SUBMIT A TIP" link located on the DEA website.

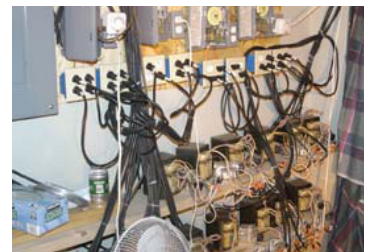
**FACTS ABOUT MARIJUANA:** Marijuana is a Schedule I substance under the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). Schedule I drugs are classified as having a high potential for abuse, no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States, and a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug or other substance under medical supervision. Marijuana is the most widely used illicit drug in America—of the approximately 14 million current illicit drug users<sup>1</sup>, 10.7 million are using marijuana.<sup>2</sup>



- Sixty percent of those currently entering drug treatment are doing so because of marijuana use.<sup>3</sup>
- Of the 4.6 million Americans suffering from illegal drug dependence or serious abuse<sup>4</sup>, two-thirds are dependent on or are abusing marijuana<sup>5</sup>.
- More young people are now in treatment for marijuana dependency than for all other illegal drugs combined.<sup>6</sup>
- Marijuana use as a cause for emergency room visits has dramatically increased—surpassing heroin - and has risen 176 percent since 1994<sup>7</sup>.
- Studies show smoking marijuana leads to changes in the brain similar to those caused by the use of cocaine and heroin.<sup>8</sup>
- Heavy marijuana abuse impairs the ability of young people to retain information during their peak learning years, when their brains are still developing.<sup>9</sup>
- Research shows that youth who use marijuana weekly are nearly four times more likely to engage in violence than non-marijuana users.<sup>1</sup>

Ask yourself: Do you know your neighbors? Have you been inside their home or does something seem peculiar or different about their home? In order to deflect suspicion, it is not unusual for children to reside in homes being used to cultivate marijuana. The indicators listed below may reveal a marijuana grow that is contained in a home in your neighborhood:

- Windows are covered/blacked out and are never opened.
- Windows have condensation forming due to high levels of humidity.
- Neighbors are seen at the home only on a sporadic basis.
- New neighbors move into a home without furniture or belongings. They are rarely seen entering or exiting with groceries or conducting everyday chores.
- Access to the residence is primarily through the garage.



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- Unusual traffic, such as a heavy volume of visitors for short amounts of time, and visitors may be waiting outside in the car.
- People are seen entering with plastic sheeting, plant stocks, fertilizer bags, plastic piping, large amounts of potting soil and pots. These items may also be left outside.
- When seen, individuals are entering or departing the residence with large heavy garbage bags.
- Additional water lines and/or electrical cords are running into the residence.
- Unusual odor omitting from the residence similar to a “skunk” smell.
- Unusual amounts of steam coming from the vents.
- Mail not picked up and garbage not taken out. This is also sometimes done to avoid suspicion.
- Very bright lights not consistent with home lighting.
- Humming sounds, hammering or drilling coming from the residence.



<sup>1</sup> National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (Table 2, NDCS 2002, 58.)

<sup>2</sup> National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (Table 2, NDCS 2002, 58.)

<sup>3</sup> National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, Table 5.25a

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Dept HHS, *Closing the Drug Abuse Treatment Gap: A Report to the President of the United States* (September, 2001) (NDCS 2002, Table 31, 79.)

<sup>5</sup> National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, Table 5.25a

<sup>6</sup> TEDs Treatment Episodes Data Set 1994-1999: “National Admissions to Substance Abuse Treatment Services,” SAMHSA October, 2001.

<sup>7</sup> SAMHSA, DAWN, ED 2001

<sup>8</sup> NIDA: *Marijuana: Facts Parents Need to Know*, November 1998.

<sup>9</sup> NIDA: *Marijuana: Facts Parents Need to Know*, November 1998. (14.Pope, HG. and Yurgelun-Todd, D. The Residual Cognitive Effects of Heavy Marijuana Use in College Students. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. February 21, 1996 Vol 275, No. 7. )

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